3: Skrine G-3 (1922-1924) 1926 All Sinkiang All

spray of beaten-gold flowers quivering on gold wire stalks, bunches of similar ornaments above each ear and huge gold filigree earrings. Their hair was in plaits, with a long black silk tassel attached to each plait. The dresses were of red, blue, emerald, plum, purple, pink and many other bright tints, and the sunlight streaming through the one window lit up a most wonderful picture.

"Two chairs had been placed side by side at one end of the room, one for me and one for the bride when she should come. One of the guests who came soon after me was another little bride, some relation of the family but not the girl for whose wedding the party was given. I was told that it was only her second appearance in public since her wedding, and it was perhaps for this reason that her reception was particularly pretty. All the ladies stood up, and as she was led from one to the other each gave her a kiss and shook hands Turki fashion, i.e. taking her clasped hands in theirs and then touching their own lips with a graceful gesture. She was only fifteen, I think, and terribly shy to begin with. She was led up to me and placed in the chair next mine for a few minutes, but she soon slid on to the floor and sat beside her younger sister, a talkative child of eleven who had been told off to fan me. A few belated guests were ushered in, and having shaken hands all round, were assisted to take off their outdoor caps and veils and immediately presented by our hostess with brand-new indoor caps, which unlike the outdoor ones have no fur or lining. Some of the women had brought their own and politely refused the offer of a new one; but it must add considerably to the expense of giving a party when you have to provide indoor caps to guests who have forgotten theirs! Tea was served, soon after I arrived, in small china cups with sugar and no milk. Our hostess and her relations had none themselves, but spent their time handing round cups, filling them up with tea and spooning in sugar. There was one lady whom I could not take my eyes off, she was such a wonderful figure in her crimson satin dress with eight long plaits of hair hanging down from under her richly-embroidered cap, and fastened on to four of these long black silk tassels which swept the ground as she moved about. After the cups had been cleared away the musicians struck up and some of the ladies rose and danced in the usual way, one at a time; but soon the long narrow *dastarkhwans* or cloths spread on the ground for eating were put out once more and huge trays of peaches and nectarines were brought in. These disappeared in a marvellously short time and were followed by some more music and dancing, and at about half-past twelve the wedding feast began in earnest. The first course was a very popular one called the Wedding Dish, a sort of soufflé made of stiffly-beaten white of egg and powdered sugar, which is always eaten at weddings. It was served in small bowls with pieces of bread. The arrival of this dish was a signal for a temporary relaxation of the intense decorum which had hitherto characterized the proceedings. The children who had come with their mammas, and who had up to now been playing in the court-yard, crowded into the room or leant in through the wide windows, clamouring for some of the Wedding Dish. The heat became terrific. The hostess had disappeared, presumably to superintend the preparation of the special dishes which were to be served later on. The lady of the eight pigtails and other friends of the family, having

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changed their beautiful but hot satin dresses for simpler affairs of thin silk and muslin, hurried about refilling the bowls, breaking up the bread into suitable-sized pieces and looking after everybody, while two maids did their best to keep us all cool by flapping a large table-cloth in the middle of the room. When the last of the Wedding Dish had been finished, the *dastarkhwans* were taken out to be shaken and we all had our hands washed Mussulman fashion; copper jugs and basins were brought in, and as each of us in turn held out our sticky hands the ladies of the house poured water over them into the basins. Huge piles of round flat loaves of bread about eighteen inches across then appeared and were placed at intervals opposite the guests. Next came large flat dishes of a savoury stew of mutton and vegetables, which was rapidly spooned up by the ladies with corners of bread. Titbits and succulent little bones with meat on them were handed through the window by fond mammas to their clamouring children. When this course was finished there were still a good many of the flat loaves remaining and these were distributed among the guests. One was rather tentatively offered to me; I accepted it joyfully, which was considered a great joke. Fruit, sweets and tea followed, and when everything had been cleared away and another hand-washing had taken place, the musicians struck up again.

"The women danced and I found myself in conversation with a plump elderly dame, the mother of a leading ice-merchant, who was giving Aisha Khan and myself a graphic description of the illness and last moments of her first husband; I did not notice therefore that most of the older ladies had left the room, and it was only when Aisha Khan whispered 'They've gone to fetch the bride,' that I awoke to the fact that satin dresses and velvet jackets had been resumed and every one was looking expectantly towards the door. A few minutes later, surrounded by elderly relatives and friends, the bride appeared. I gasped, for there in the afternoon sunlight which streamed through the windows stood a tall slim figure clad in glittering gold from head to foot. A long coat of gold brocade hid her satin dress, a veil of golden gauze fell round her face and down her back, great sprays of gold flower ornaments quivered in her cap and long earrings of gold and pearls and a heavy chain and pendant of the same metal completed her adornment. She might have been a bride for Tamerlane or some such great Emperor of the olden days! A thin white silk veil was thrown over her face and head, and she was led up to the chair beside mine with great ceremony and made to sit down. Poor thing, she was so nervous that her breath came in gasps and her hands when I touched them were icy cold. All the guests drew back, then a little girl of about four was pushed forward and running up to the bride snatched away the white veil. This was the signal for a regular outburst, all the guests screaming and laughing and chattering at the same time, and then falling on the bride and kissing her. When this, evidently the most important part of the ceremony, was over I thought it was about time to go, as it was nearly four o'clock.

"What strikes me most about these women is their manners, which are as pretty as their clothes. When the hostess gives tea or anything else to one of her guests, the latter rises and bows saying '*Ashkalla*' (thank you). On arrival and departure they make delicious little polite speeches to each other—much more picturesque than our mean-

3: Skrine G-3 (1922-1924) 1926 All Sinkiang All

585 ingless 'How do you do?' They have nice smiling cheery faces
576 and a way of appearing pleased to see one, which is most disarming. Some of them are startlingly beautiful in the regular Aryan style, with pencilled eyebrows, straight noses and oval faces; others have *broad, rather flat faces like the Kirghiz, but laughter comes so easily* to them that even the plain faces become attractive."

586 In nine cases out of ten, according to Murad Qari, these child-marriages *de convenance* are failures and soon dissolved. For the husband, there is no difficulty about a divorce; all he has to do is to go to the Qazi—the woman's presence is not necessary—and put his seal on an affidavit (*jai*) to the effect that he divorces his wife; this affidavit costs him two tenga (4*d*.) and the thing is done. Lawful conditions and terms, if any, are included in the *jai*, which also states whether the divorce is to be *ba'in* (permanent) or *raja'i* (non-binding).[1]

A wife cannot divorce her husband without his consent; all she can do is to leave him and wait till he divorces her, when she can marry some one else after 100 days. As he can marry again at once and as often as he likes up to a total number of four wives at a time, he is in a strong position and can exact his own terms. These generally include the waiving of the *mihr*, and as low a figure as possible for the maintenance of the woman and any children there may be. In most cases it is the woman who is the suppliant, and the man who "gives her a paper," i.e. *jai* or affidavit of divorce. Sometimes she pays quite a large sum for it; but this is illegal and must not be mentioned in the *jai*. In other cases she induces the man to let her go by giving up the furniture and utensils she brought with her to his house.

586 Let me give one or two illustrations of the working of this curious system. Our coachman, Abdulla, was a much-
595 married man. He went one better than the celebrated guard on the Paris-Lyons-Méditerranée, who had one wife and establishment in Paris and another at Marseilles, each unaware of the other's existence; for he kept a wife at Yarkand (whither he often accompanied us on tour) and *two* at Kashgar, one of them living at the Consulate and the other in the town. All went well until one day news reached the Consulate wife not only that the Yarkand lady existed, but that she proposed coming to Kashgar. As Mrs. Abdulla No. 1 wailed to D., "It's bad enough his marrying that dreadful person in

[1] From the Arabic root *raja'a*, "return," the wife being lawfully permitted to re-marry the same husband. After *ba'in* divorce this is illegal.

S N 563 291 S N [292]

/Chinese Moslems (Dungans)/

within the railings in the mosque and read the Koran, wear white or green turbans, the leader's turban being more elaborate, with a tassel hanging down the back. Common people wear pointed octagonal caps of white, red or black, the color distinguishing the sect to which they belong.

Some women dress differently from the Chinese women, and wear a sort of turban hat. Ordinarily their dresses are in dark colors, but they may wear gay colors for festivals. According to ancient custom they must veil their faces in the presence of men, but this custom was abandoned long ago.

S N [369]

In cities and towns where the Chinese Moslems dress exactly like the Han Chinese, the men can be distinguished by their physical build and features, but the women are not easily recognized.

S N 563 463

d. Occupation

Most Chinese Moslems are business men and traders, and most of them also farm. As farmers they are not equal to the Han Chinese, but they excel in dealing with cattle and everywhere they monopolize the beef and sheep trade. They are also merchants, bakers, workers in jade, money changers, and inn and restaurant keepers.

S N 563 265 262

Outside a Moslem-owned restaurant there hangs a sign displaying a water pot surmounted by a dress hat, and two Chinese characters, Hui-hui. The pot signifies ceremonial cleanliness and guarantees that no pork is used. The hat indicates respect to customers. There are also two Chinese characters on the tea pot, meaning "Pure and True."

S N 563 463 709 784

Formerly their religion forebade the Moslems to become money-lenders, barbers, fortune-tellers, actors, or servants or apprentices to the Chinese. How strictly the people now observe this taboo is not known.

3. Social values

S N 563 186 183

a. Group spirit

The we-feeling is very strong among the Dungans. The whole group will sacrifice time and money for an individual oppressed by outsiders, and fight for him until justice prevails. Endowed with a courageous nature, the Moslem man is willing to sacrifice his life for the welfare of the group.

S N 563 571 186 183 [576] [196]

This spirit is shown by overt expression in daily social relationships. The Chinese title Lao-piao (old cousin) is applied even to a stranger of the same religious faith. The word old signifies respect; cousin signifies blood relationship. Hence Lao-piao indicates a feeling of closeness toward all members of the faith. Another expression of this feeling is found in the saying that "every Moslem in the world belongs to the same family."

S N 563 183 709 431

b. Concept of charity

Many of the values in Chinese Moslem society are based upon

/The New Uighurs/

563 764 [793] come to have one last glimpse of the deceased. Tradition forbids a woman to look upon the face of a dead man, a tradition seldom observed now, but no man, not even the husband, may look at the face of a dead woman.

[184] Among the poor, funeral services take place on the second day in summer, the third in winter. The wealthy delay burial until the third or fourth day to allow time for the relatives to assemble.

No coffin is used. The body is carried in a felt, placed on a [793] stretcher and covered with a white sheet. After a mullah reads [783] a prayer of absolution, four men lift the stretcher and the mourners proceed to the graveyard. Relatives and friends walk in front of the stretcher, the Mullahs behind. Women accompany the procession for a short distance, but never to the grave.

[171] The rites of burial, the position in which the body is placed and the covering of the grave are similar to those of the Kirghiz. 563 764 782 [784] After the mullahs have prayed over the covered grave, the mourners go to the house of a relative where all pray for the deceased. This ceremony is performed in another house because no fire may be made nor food cooked for three days in a house in which death has occurred. The rich perform the post-interment prayers in a tent erected next to the grave, and mullahs [184] are engaged to read the Koran for a time varying, with the family's social and financial position, from seven to forty days.

563 765 Traditionally, close relatives of the deceased, both rich and poor, mourn for forty days after the funeral. They wear black or white robes with white sashes, and the sons of the deceased do not shave their heads.

[782] Three days after death, prayer is said in the home of the deceased. The same kind of prayer, for the redemption of the dead person's sins, is said on the twentieth day after death, and again on the fortieth. On the fortieth day after the death, a close friend of the deceased invites the sons to his home, removes their mourning robes and shaves their heads. The last prayer is offered on the first anniversary of the death.

f. Etiquette and manners

563 562 576 Among most of the New Uighurs who respect the Moslem tradition, it is the women who keep up the prescribed standard of etiquette. In the presence of guests, it is customary for the wife to rise when her husband enters the room, and go and sit near the threshold until the husband seats himself. Also, to hand him anything she must rise, and offer it with both hands. Women always wear some sort of headgear when they eat. This does not mean that the women of Sinkiang are treated as slaves by their husbands. In general they enjoy considerable independence compared with women in other Moslem countries.

563 576 Relations between the New Uighurs are characterized by

/The New Uighurs/

563 576 mutual courtesy. In addressing one another they use the polite form of you. The same politeness is demonstrated between wife and husband. Parents use the equivalent of "thou" to address their children, servants or workers. Upon meeting a friend or entering a friend's house they say "As-salam Alaikum," and the reply is "Alaikum as-salam." They inquire about the health of the family, then bow and shake hands. Only women kiss when they meet, and only if they are related. When they part they say "Khosh," or "Allah Akbar," meaning, "The Lord is great."

563 576 574 264 [782] The more religious women pray before eating or starting to do something. Washing the hands before and after meals is mandatory. Bowls of water and towels are provided at a feast or banquet table, and hands are washed between courses. When a hostess serves refreshments to a guest, the guest rises, bows and says "Ishqallah," meaning thank you. Polite speeches are made by both host and guest on the guest's arrival and departure. Good manners are regarded as important.

4. Superstitions and taboos

563 771 [776] [778] [769] The New Uighurs attach superstition to almost everything. They believe in witches, ghosts, charms and talismans. As mentioned before, they believe in the powers of local saints and heroes, to whom they have dedicated innumerable shrines, and certain superstitions connect these shrines with the curing of disease and the bearing of children. Ancestor worship is also strong among them, as shown by the popular names of the shrines.

[756] [755] [789] 563 771 775 [782] [825] The people are also firm believers in witch-doctors, and in magic powers that cure disease, induce love, or sow enmity between people. Ghosts are much feared, especially the ghost of a Chinese. People regard the Urumchi Road from Kashgar as a haunt for Chinese ghosts. They believe that if one is haunted he may be able to propitiate the ghosts by leaving money on his doorstep overnight. If the money is gone in the morning, the ghosts have taken it and will make no further trouble. They also have a superstitious dread of snakes, and believe that if one kills a snake, its mate will haunt him.

563 372 [799] 563 821 The New Uighurs try to maintain an everlasting fire in their fireplaces, to bring prosperity to the house. Ashes from the fireplace are carried out at night or before sunrise, for to clean the fireplace and take out the ashes during the day may bring misfortune to the household. They fear thunder, and during a thunderstorm they pray for deliverance from threatening danger.

5. Religious celebrations and festivals

563 796 Like the festivals of Moslems the world over, the festivals of the New Uighurs are deeply colored with religious influence. Besides Fridays, which are generally celebrated, the people have only three main holidays, Rōse-hăyt, Kurban-hăyt and

3:Cable & French M-5 (1926) 1927 AF13 Northwest China
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grows to enormous size, and varieties of the little '*tien kwa*,' '*mien kwa*' and '*hsiang kwa*' were here, as in China, prime favourites with the Chinese. Melon cultivation has been carried by the Kumulik to a fine art. On a sandy or stony patch the plants are so trained as to allow each fruit to rest upon a dry, sand-baked spot, where it absorbs the heat of the torrid rays. The grower must work ceaselessly in his garden, watering, pruning and training the tendrils, and when the fruit has come to perfection he and his assistant never leave the tiny lodge from which they watch their precious merchandise, even taking it in turn to sleep. When the fruit is still quite young and the skin soft, each melon is branded with the grower's monomark, and when ripe this mark stands out in bold relief, white and hard.

One day we took a good consignment of Arabic gospels and tracts in our cart, and with the Chinese Evangelist went to pay some calls in the Huei Huei city. As we entered the gate we were met by an old white-bearded Ahung in a white turban and long gown. By his side walked a tall and beautiful woman in a pale blue cotton dress and white veil, who carried a water-pot on her head. The whole picture was so reminiscent of Galilean scenes as to cause us a momentary shock as we realised that this was not Nazareth but the 'shameful city of Camul'—for thus did Marco Polo refer to this oasis of the desert.

As usual the women asked us to their houses, and where there was a difficulty with the language it always seemed easy to find an interpreter, for the Moslem frequently adds a Chinese wife to his harem, and many of the people are bilingual. The rooms in which we were received were not unlike those of the Chinese, only that the *kangs* were much lower and unwarmed,

3:Cable & French M-5 (1926) 1927 AF13 Northwest China
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and covered with handsome carpets. In accordance with the custom we took off our shoes before mounting them. The family wardrobe was kept in handsome, inlaid boxes, and on the tables stood large brass dishes which served to hold the national dish of 'pillau,' as well as brass and copper pots for purposes of purification.

In every house there were several wives and many children. The number of inhabitants of such cities as stated on maps and in surveys is seriously underrated, the extraordinarily rapid increase both by the number of children born and by colonisation having brought the population to a much higher figure than statistics allow.

After visiting a few homes, we proceeded to view a remarkable willow tree which is reckoned as being one of the sights of Hami. This plant presents a congeries of about fifty trunks, curiously gnarled, knotted, and intertwined, and yet all are said to grow from one root, having spread so as to fill several courtyards. After duly admiring this wonder we returned to the cart, and when we had taken our seats, opened our parcel of books. In a moment the word went round, and we were the centre of an excited crowd of boys, each of whom wanted to buy a volume. Experience of the bold and insolent Moslem schoolboy, however, had taught us to be wary in dealing with them, so before we allowed one copy to be purchased the Evangelist explained that on every page the sacred name of 'Huda' (God) was written, which must on no account be treated with disrespect. Nevertheless, for as long as the store of books lasted, we sold them as fast as we could hand them out to both old and young alike, and when the last was gone the demand for more was so persistent that the driver was obliged to whip up